

National Highways A303 Stonehenge update

As reported previously, on 30 July 2021 a judicial review judgment about the A303 Stonehenge scheme was handed down by the High Court, and two of the ten grounds submitted were upheld.

The remaining grounds were all rejected. Both successful grounds related to the decision-making process and not to any evidence presented by National Highways as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

This meant the scheme's DCO (or planning permission) was quashed.

On 30 November 2021, the Secretary of State for Transport issued what is known as a "Statement of Matters". This formally announces his intention to look again at the scheme's DCO application.

The Statement of Matters set out a number of issues that the Secretary of State would like further information from National Highways and other interested parties. This includes details about alternative scheme options as well as updates on environmental information, impact on carbon and climate change. National Highways needs to respond by 11 January 2022.

This information will be shared on the Planning Inspectorate's website shortly after 11 January, the timing for this has not been announced yet. People and interested organisations will be invited to comment, and then National Highways will make further responses. The Secretary of State will consider all the information and comments and make a new decision on the scheme's DCO application.

There is no time limit or guidance on how long this should take, and at present we do not know when the Secretary of State may announce a new decision.

National Highways remains confident the scheme is the best solution to solving the traffic problems along this notoriously congested section of the A303 and to remove the sight and the sound of the traffic from the Stonehenge landscape and the World Heritage Site.